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Report of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues on its 2004 session

Summary

The 2004 session of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) focused on the Millennium Development Goals vis-à-vis indigenous peoples. The meeting provided inputs into the preparations of the special theme for 2005 of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Support Group adopted a statement on Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples and prepared a technical position paper on the subject.

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Introduction

1. The annual session of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) was held in New York on 30 September and 1 October 2004. The Support Group had been established in 2002 and convenes annually under a rotating chair among its members.

2. The 2004 session was convened and hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The agenda and programme of work of the session are contained in annex I.

Participants at the session

3. Representatives of the following United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations, funds, programmes and departments attended: Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Division for the Advancement of Women, secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests), Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity,[1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Labour Organization (ILO), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNDP, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[2] United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank and European Union (EU). The Support Group welcomed the participation for the first time of UNAIDS, the Inter-American Development Bank and EU. Following a decision of the Permanent Forum at its third session in 2004,[3] four members of the Permanent Forum — Mr. Yuri Boychenko, Mr. Wilton Littlechild, Ms. Ida Nicolaisen and Mr. Parshuram Tamang — also participated.

I. Integration of indigenous issues in implementing the Millennium Development Goals

4. The session included presentations from various representatives within the United Nations system involved in Millennium Development Goals-related work ranging from the United Nations Millennium Project and the Millennium Campaign[4] to Millennium Development Goal country reporting[5] and data collection. Of critical importance to the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues is the review of the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see General

Assembly resolution 55/2), to be undertaken at a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session in 2005, which aims to take stock of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration thus far and to provide recommendations for future action. The review is an opportunity to advocate for the inclusion of indigenous peoples and their issues in the Millennium Development Goals process.

5. All presentations highlighted the general absence of indigenous peoples from much of the work being undertaken on the Millennium Development Goals. The Millennium Campaign has not yet targeted indigenous peoples; the United Nations Millennium Project pilot countries do not focus on particular marginalized groups or on issues of concern to indigenous peoples, such as land and natural resource management and culture and human rights; and the national progress reports, except for a few, have not actively included indigenous peoples' organizations in the consultation process and/or addressed indigenous peoples in their data-collection exercises.

6. It should be noted that strong criticism emerged from the Support Group on the Campaign's efforts to target evangelical groups.

7. Discussion focused on how to integrate indigenous peoples in this work and how indigenous peoples' issues and indicators can be integrated into the Millennium Development Goals.

8. Some of the challenges identified in the discussions focused on the integration of the Millennium Development Goals in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process; the need for data collection and disaggregation on indigenous peoples, as inequalities can be hidden by the averages reported; and the importance of effective indigenous participation in the national reporting.

9. In addition, a significant challenge lies within the conceptual framework: Indigenous peoples' concepts of development, of poverty and of education, for example, greatly differ from Western constructions. It was noted that the effort to meet the Millennium Development Goal targets established for their achievement could in fact have harmful effects on indigenous and tribal peoples, such as the acceleration of the loss of lands and natural resources on which indigenous peoples' livelihoods have traditionally depended or the displacement of indigenous peoples from those lands.

10. The presenters recognized that greater efforts have to be made to include indigenous peoples' participation in the Millennium Development Goals process and to ensure that indigenous peoples' issues are included. Consequently, they seek advice and inputs from the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues secretariat and the Support Group. The meeting of the Support Group created the opportunity for greater engagement and coordination among the divisions within the system specifically tasked with working on the Millennium Development Goals.

Next steps and recommendations

11. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues adopted a statement on indigenous peoples and the Millennium Development Goals (see annex II) containing a number of recommendations, and requested that a press release be issued on this matter.**

12. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues agreed to prepare a technical paper on the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples vis-à-vis the Millennium Development Goals that would feed into the 2005 Millennium Development Goals review process. ILO has taken the lead.**

13. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues requested the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues secretariat to contact the Forum with a view to preparing, by 1 November 2004, a commentary on the draft (dated 23 September 2004) of the final report of the United Nations Millennium Project entitled "A Global Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals".**

14. **The United Nations Millennium Project requested that, for the report, the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues provide specific examples of successes and failures of indigenous peoples' engagement in development processes.**

15. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues requested that reference to indigenous peoples and their concerns be included in the Millennium Development Goal national progress report guidelines.**

16. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues recommended that the Millennium Campaign in cooperation with the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues secretariat organize a meeting to inform indigenous leaders on the Millennium Development Goals.**

17. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues recommended that the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues secretariat study the Millennium Development Goal reports in order to identify the status of indigenous peoples as considered therein.**

18. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues recommended that the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues review the Millennium Development Goals as a package and not in terms of separate Goals, and in relation to the United Nations Millennium Declaration, as adopted jointly.**

19. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues requested that the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean share an upcoming draft report on Millennium Development Goals and ethnicity in the region.**

20. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues recommended that the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues secretariat and Support Group focal points engage in lead-up meetings to the five-year review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.**

II. Strengthening the work of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues with the United Nations system

21. The secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues provided an overview on how the Forum has been working with the United Nations system in its last three sessions and on possible additional avenues of cooperation.

22. The discussion focused on the following issues:

(a) Information exchange: What kind of information does the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues wish to receive from the United Nations system and how does the Forum wish to receive it?

(b) Forum recommendations: ways of improving how the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues makes recommendations to the United Nations system and how to enhance follow-up. Some of the concerns voiced were included in the following questions: how can a multiplicity of recommendations be avoided? should the Forum focus on recommendations for one week of the session? how can the United Nations system relate these recommendations to its areas of work? should there be a discussion on what have been the obstacles to implementing the recommendations?

(c) Methodology and discussion: how to encourage more discussion between the United Nations system and the members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues during the session; how to avoid a format of discussion resembling that of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations; how to balance the technical part of the meeting with that of the "forum" for discussion and statements;

(d) Interventions: the three-minute time limit for statements may need to be reviewed, especially for high-level United Nations interventions;

(e) New members: how the information and knowledge acquired by members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues up to now can be shared with new members;

(f) Interaction with the United Nations system: how to improve communication with organizations during and in-between the sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and how to ensure a link between the Forum and the activities of the United Nations organizations at the field level.

23. The members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues who were present acknowledged the usefulness of the information and documentation presented by the United Nations system at the annual sessions of the Forum.

Next steps and recommendations

24. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues recommended that more room for technical discussion be provided during the forum part of the sessions.**

25. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues recommended that a focus be placed on regional perspectives.**

26. **Methods to ensure closer contact and communication between members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues who are portfolio-holders and their organization counterparts should be developed.**

27. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues recommended that organization focal points share information on the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and its recommendations with their country offices and promote the creation of an informal network of officers focusing on indigenous issues. The Support Group and the Forum secretariat are to be included in the network.**

28. **Regarding pre-sessional documentation: given the voluminous amount of documentation, it would be helpful if members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues could receive the sections that relate to their portfolios before the session so as to be able to provide a more in-depth assessment of the work, prepare statements on the issues, and propose relevant recommendations.**

29. **The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues could facilitate meetings between indigenous regional caucuses and organizations during its sessions to discuss progress made at the regional and subregional levels.**

30. **As the practice of visits to United Nations organization by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues enhances cooperation and follow-up of recommendations, these visits should be continued.**

III. Organizational matters: next steps and recommendations

31. **The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues will continue to work via e-mail in-between sessions. Of particular importance is the continued contribution of the Support Group to the work of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and to the Task Force on Indigenous Women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality.**

32. **UNICEF will convene and host the next session of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues in 2005.**

Notes

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

[2] Ibid., vol. 1771, No. 20822.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 23* (E/2004/43), chap. I, para. 113.

[4] For further information on the Millennium campaign, please visit the Campaign web site (www.milleniumcampaign.org).

[5] A number of national reports documenting the progress in achieving the Goals have already been produced and may be accessed at http://www.undg.org.

Annex I

Agenda and programme of work of the 2004 session of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues

(United Nations Development Programme headquarters, New York,* 30 September and 1 October 2004)

30 September

I. Integration of indigenous issues in implementing the Millennium Development Goals

a.m.

8:30-9 — *Light breakfast will be served.*

Co-Chairs: Mr. Thierno Kane, Director, Civil Society Organization Division, Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships, UNDP; and Mr. Yuri A. Boychenko (Russian Federation), member, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

9-9.15 — Opening remarks

Mr. Bruce Jenks, Director, Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships, UNDP

9.15-10.45 — Millennium Development Goals: progress and potential

- Overview of programmatic work of the United Nations Development Group on the Millennium Development Goals

  Mr. Turhan Saleh, Millennium Development Goal Unit, Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships, UNDP

- Millennium Campaign: strategy and approaches being undertaken at regional and local levels

  Mr. Salil Shetty, Director, Millennium Campaign

- United Nations Millennium Project: country pilots

  Mr. John McArthur, United Nations Millennium Project

Discussion

10.45-11 — Break

11-noon — Millennium Development Goals: progress and potential

- Data collection: challenges and ways forward

  Ms. Mary Chamie, Demographic and Social Statistics Branch, United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

* Hank Shannon conference room, 21st floor.

- Millennium Development Goal country progress reports: status of national reporting

  Mr. Selim Jahan, Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP

Discussion

p.m.

noon-12.05 Break

12.05-1.15 Moderated discussion: What are useful approaches and methodologies for the promotion of Millennium Development Goals vis-à-vis indigenous peoples?

Moderator: Mr. Arthur Erken, United Nations Development Group

- Goal-oriented strategies
- Resources needed to get there
- Challenges and how to address them
- Needs assessments and disaggregated data
- Long-term policy plans
- Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and the Millennium Development Goals
- Integrated strategies (interlinkage of Millennium Development Goals, international cooperation/assistance)

1.15-2.15 *Lunch served by UNDP.*

2.30-3.15 Discussion: Next steps on Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples

II. Strengthening the work of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues with the United Nations system

p.m.

3.20-3.45 Overview of methodologies and identification of good practices

Co-chairs: Elsa Stamatopoulou, Chief, secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and Parshuram Tamang (Nepal), Forum member

3.45- 4.45 Moderated discussion: Challenges and areas for improvement

Moderator: Mr. Lee Swepston, ILO

4.45-5 Break

5-6 Proposed next steps

- Proposals for increased engagement of the United Nations system and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- IASG action through the United Nations Development Group

- IASG action on indigenous women through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality

1 October

a.m.

9-9.30 *Light breakfast will be served.*

Co-chairs: Mr. Richard Morgan, UNICEF, and Ms. Ida Nicolaisen (Denmark), member, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

9.30-9.45 Millennium Development Goals: progress and potential

Overview of preparations for the five-year review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the September 2005 Summit

Mr. Mourad Wahba, Director, Division for United Nations Affairs, Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships, UNDP

9.45-11 Discussion and conclusions on useful steps for organizations preparatory to the fourth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

III. Organizational matters

Chair: Ms. Vanda Altarelli, International Fund for Agricultural Development

a.m.

11-noon Discussion on IASG work plan in-between sessions (including follow-up to recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues addressed to more than one organization)

- Work via e-mail?
- Group e-mail?
- Task forces?

11.30-12.30 Discussion on Workshop on Free, Prior and Informed Consent in January 2005

p.m.

noon-12.30 Round on upcoming indigenous-related United Nations system events

12.30-1 Other matters

- Membership of IASG
- Convener and date of next session of IASG

1-1.15 Closing remarks

Mr. Thierno Kane, Civil Society Organization Division, Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships, UNDP

Annex II

Statement adopted by the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues regarding indigenous peoples and the Millennium Development Goals

1. At its session held on 30 September and 1 October 2004 in New York, the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues discussed the Millennium Development Goals as they pertain to indigenous peoples. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has strategically decided to devote the special theme of its 2005 session to indigenous peoples and the Millennium Development Goals. Four members of the Forum were also present at the meeting of the Support Group, namely, Mr. Yuri Boychenko, Mr. Wilton Littlechild, Ms. Ida Nicolaisen and Mr. Parshuram Tamang.

2. The Support Group considers that indigenous and tribal peoples have the right to benefit from the Millennium Development Goals, and from other goals and aspirations contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, to the same extent as all others. However, as the 2005 review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals nears, it appears from the available evidence that indigenous and tribal peoples are lagging behind other parts of the population in the achievement of the goals in most, if not all, of the countries in which they live, and indigenous and tribal women commonly face additional gender-based disadvantages and discrimination.

3. Detailed information and statistics describing their situation are often lacking, as was made clear during the International Workshop on Data Collection and Disaggregation for Indigenous Peoples held from 19 to 21 January 2004. The workshop was convened by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs pursuant to Economic and Social Council decision 2003/300 of 25 July 2003, which was adopted by the Council upon a recommendation made by the Forum at its second session (see document E/C.19/2004/2 for the report of the workshop). Lack of adequate disaggregated data is a problem for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Nevertheless, the information available — both statistics that do exist and experience acquired in the course of our work — indicates that these peoples rank at the bottom in terms of the social indicators in virtually every respect.

4. Concern has also been expressed that the effort to meet the targets laid down for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals could in fact have harmful effects on indigenous and tribal peoples, such as the acceleration of the loss of the lands and natural resources on which indigenous peoples' livelihoods have traditionally depended or the displacement of indigenous peoples from those lands. Because the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples is often not reflected in statistics or is hidden by national averages, there is a concern that efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals could, in some cases, have a negative impact on indigenous and tribal peoples while national indicators apparently improve.

5. While the Millennium Development Goals carry a potential for assessing the major problems faced by indigenous peoples, the Millennium Development Goals and the indicators for their achievement do not necessarily capture the specificities of indigenous and tribal peoples and their visions. Efforts are needed at the national,

regional and international levels to achieve the Millennium Development Goals with the full participation of indigenous communities — women and men — without interfering with their development paths and their holistic understanding of their needs. Such efforts must take into account the multiple levels and sources of the discrimination and exclusion faced by indigenous peoples.

6. The Support Group therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. There is a need to take the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples fully into account in the efforts of the international system to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the other aspirations of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

2. The 2005 review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals should, when dealing with each and every goal, take explicitly into account the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples and not only in respect of issues related to poverty.

3. It is important for each intergovernmental organization to continue to develop its sources of disaggregated data and information on indigenous and tribal peoples.

4. Organizations should collect and disseminate the pertinent information on a timely basis to demonstrate the specific situation of indigenous peoples in the process of implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

5. The United Nations system should increase its commitment and attention to the gender dimensions of indigenous issues in the Millennium Development Goals process.

6. Each organization should ensure that indigenous and tribal peoples are consulted, including the participation of indigenous women and, as relevant, children and youth, in formulating, implementing and assessing its programmes for the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

7. The common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) process should take full account of the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples. The role of the United Nations Country Teams is, in that respect, crucial.

8. States should ensure the inclusion of indigenous issues in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and in development efforts more generally, and should include the situation of indigenous peoples in reporting on the implementation of the Goals.

9. States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations should promote national dialogues, including through the establishment of institutional frameworks, as appropriate, in order to bring together indigenous peoples' perspectives and priorities for sustainable human development and their expectations regarding the Millennium Development Goals. Indigenous peoples' institutions and processes, where they exist, should be respected during these dialogues.

10. Partnerships at the international and national levels should increase efforts to support and build on indigenous peoples' articulation of their path of development and their full participation in the decision-making processes. They should make every effort to provide adequate funding, technical and institutional support and training to assist those development efforts, as articulated by indigenous peoples, towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

7. The members of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues will support the efforts of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to analyse and comment on the ongoing review by the international system of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The Support Group looks forward to the Millennium Campaign's outreach to, and engagement with, indigenous communities.

8. The concerns expressed in the present statement, and the situation of indigenous peoples in relation to development and the achievement of the key objectives of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals should be brought to the attention of the Secretary-General and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

Annex III

Technical position paper prepared by the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues on the Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples

I. Introduction

1. When the Heads of State adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration in September 2000, they committed their nations to global efforts to reduce poverty, improve health and promote peace, human rights and environmental sustainability. The eight quantifiable Millennium Development Goals, derived from the Millennium Declaration, are to be achieved by 2015. The Millennium Development Goals should be understood in context of the Millennium Declaration, which recognizes and reaffirms human rights treaties. In this sense, a State cannot achieve the Millennium Development Goals while disregarding human rights principles, including the principle of non-discrimination.

2. Civil society including indigenous peoples was not formally involved in the formulation of the Goals and until now it has been largely absent from developing Millennium Development Goal strategies and indicators as well as from the monitoring and reporting process. Consequently, indigenous peoples' awareness and understanding of the Millennium Development Goals are very limited, reinforcing their exclusion from the current processes.

3. The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) is concerned that this omission may lead to the exclusion of indigenous peoples from sharing the benefits of the Millennium Development Goals and may in fact adversely impact their communities by deepening the discrimination faced by indigenous peoples and by accelerating the exploitative use of their land and resources in the name of progress and economic development. Moreover, if the world's indigenous peoples are not included in the achievement of, and do not benefit from, the Millennium Development Goals, the overall efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 are likely to fail in many countries.

4. Recognizing the specific challenges related to indigenous peoples' development efforts, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will focus on the Millennium Development Goals at its forthcoming sessions in 2005, 2006 and 2007. The present paper, expanding on the initial (October 2004) statement of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues on the Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples, has been prepared by the Support Group as a contribution to the debates of the Forum and to the forthcoming 2005 major event on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

II. Specific challenges related to indigenous peoples' development

5. Indigenous and tribal peoples encompass approximately 5,000 distinct peoples, with the vast majority living in developing countries. Their cultures constitute a heritage of diverse knowledge, ideas and cultural expressions that are of immense value for the peoples themselves, as well as for the world as a whole.

6. As the result of various historical processes, indigenous peoples have often been excluded from political participation in the States in which they live and their rights to land and resources are seldom recognized. Indigenous peoples also suffer disproportionately from human rights abuses and the effects of conflict. As noted in the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples (A/59/258), "(i)ndigenous peoples the world over are usually among the most marginalized and dispossessed sectors of society, because they suffer discrimination and face prejudices that are often perpetuated within societies" (para. 10).

7. Indigenous peoples have specific perceptions and indicators of poverty and well-being in addition to their own strategies for poverty reduction. For indigenous peoples, poverty may be expressed as a lack of political participation, or as a loss of territorial integrity and spiritual values. In most cases, these diversified concepts of poverty are not included in national poverty reduction efforts. On the contrary, often times these economic development efforts may intensify the marginalization and impoverishment of indigenous peoples, leading, for example, to further land alienation, and loss of indigenous languages and cultural and social institutions (see E/C.19/2004/2). If the specificities of indigenous and tribal peoples are not acknowledged and addressed, there is a risk that the universality and simplicity of expression of the Millennium Development Goals may lead to homogenization instead of equality in respect of enjoyment of rights.

8. In short, here lies the double challenge posed to the Millennium Development Goals by indigenous peoples: on the one hand, they have the right to be fully included in, and to benefit from, the global efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals; on the other, their right to define their own development path and priorities must be respected, in order to ensure that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals contributes to the full realization and strengthening of the potential of these peoples.

9. The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues is concerned that, in some countries, indigenous peoples may even be deliberately left out of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, as they are comparatively more difficult to reach and it is more difficult to raise their living standards to the level of other groups.

Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

10. Even in countries with a middle level of human development, indigenous peoples often live in poverty pockets owing to domestic structural inequalities.[a] A review of the Millennium Development Goal progress reports in countries that have significant populations of indigenous peoples reveals that few are undertaking the

effort needed to provide specific information and disaggregated data on the poverty of indigenous peoples. One exception is the Guatemalan Millennium Development Goal report (2002), which exposes the fact that poverty and social marginalization in Guatemala do indeed have a clear ethnic dimension (see table 1).

11. The lack of economic statistics on indigenous populations is related to a fundamental lack of recognition of the informal economy in many countries. Owing to inadequate reporting, the contribution of indigenous economies to development is often not recognized.

Table 1
Selected indicators for the indigenous and non-indigenous populations, Guatemala
(Percentage)

Indicator	*Indigenous population*	*Non-indigenous population*
Proportion of population living on less that $1 (purchasing power parity) per day (2000)	24	10
Net enrolment ratio in primary education (2000)	71	84
Adult literacy rate	70	89
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	17[a]	41[b]

[a] Covering indigenous mothers.
[b] Natural average.

12. Results of recent research, however, demonstrate that national economies and society as a whole stand to gain from ending the marginalization of indigenous peoples. A study in Latin America (2000), indicates that ending the marginalization of indigenous peoples would potentially expand the national economy of Bolivia by 37 per cent, of Brazil by 13 per cent, of Guatemala by 14 per cent, and of Peru by at least 5 per cent.

13. In some countries, there are increased efforts to align their comprehensive national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) with the Millennium Development Goal framework, which could provide an opportunity for addressing issues of structural inequalities. A recent "ethnic audit" (publication forthcoming) of a number of PRSPs undertaken by the International Labour Organization (ILO) has shown that many PRSPs do not take indigenous peoples into account in the process or in the strategies proposed.

Indigenous children

14. Children born into indigenous families often live in remote areas where Governments do not invest in basic social services. Consequently, indigenous youth and children have limited or no access to health care, quality education, justice and participation. They are at particular risk of not being registered at birth and of being denied identity documents. For indigenous children, especially girls, their rights as citizens are routinely denied owing to discrimination and poverty. In this context,

they have been especially vulnerable to exploitation, for example, through trafficking, and child and forced labour.

Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women

15. The situation of indigenous women is often compounded by additional gender-based marginalization, discrimination and violence. While disparities in equality between genders are inherent in all societies, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, at its third session, recognized that "natural gender balance must be reinstated in culturally appropriate ways, within indigenous societies".[b]

16. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues also recognized that "(i)ndigenous women's roles have eroded due to the compounding factors of loss of natural resources and depletion of the ecosystems, their transformation into cash economies, changes in local, social and decision-making structures, and their lack of political status within States".[c]

17. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues further recognized that "(v)iolent conflicts and militarization fundamentally affect the lives of indigenous women and their families and communities, causing violations of their human rights and displacement from their ancestral lands".[d] Yet indigenous women are finding new and powerful roles for themselves amid this turmoil. They do not see themselves as passive victims and are increasingly recognized for their role as mediators and peacebuilders.

Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability

18. In the course of formulating Millennium Development Goal strategies for their societies, indigenous peoples incorporate value systems based on a close subsistence and spiritual relationship with natural resources and biodiversity. In a world threatened by the loss or homogenization of cultural value systems, indigenous peoples are the repositories of extremely rich, varied and locally rooted knowledge systems. Indigenous technology, land and resource management, medicine, and crops, are an important contribution to world heritage. As affirmed in paragraph 25 of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,[e] this wealth of knowledge, practices and rich cultural diversity underscores the "vital role of the indigenous peoples in sustainable development".

19. Target 11 of Millennium Development Goal 7, which foresees the achievement of "a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers" by 2020, is quite relevant to the status and needs of indigenous peoples both in urban and in rural areas, and is being pursued within the context of the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements[f] and the Habitat Agenda.[g]

20. A global research initiative that includes a number of case studies conducted jointly by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on housing conditions of indigenous peoples both in urban and in rural areas, including the status of the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing as enshrined in international instruments, reveals that indigenous peoples live in inferior conditions compared with those of the rest of the populations in those countries. Furthermore,

the research exposes the vulnerability of indigenous groups, as reflected in the effects of frequent displacement, the insecurity of tenure that they have over their traditional homelands, and the culturally inappropriate housing alternatives offered by the authorities.

21. The United Nations Development Programme *Human Development Report, 2004*[h] notes that, where national development strategies are driven by either private or public investments in natural resources and extractive industries, the activities of these industries often lead to displacement of communities and loss of lands, which affect both the sense of cultural identity and the source of livelihoods (pp. 91-92). The inadequate recognition by the State of the social, cultural and economic importance of indigenous peoples' lands and territories cannot be underestimated in its impact on their well-being and potential to reach the Millennium Development Goal targets by 2015.

III. A rights-based approach to indigenous development through the Millennium Development Goals

22. The United Nations Millennium Declaration sets out a broad framework for human development, including a focus on peace, human rights, democracy, good governance and protection of vulnerable groups. However, the Millennium Development Goals, as the distillation of this broader framework into quantifiable targets, do not create the meaningful linkages between global/national processes and the plight of indigenous peoples in respect of social, economic and cultural rights. This is compounded by the often political/historical complex of the structural determinants for indigenous peoples' poverty. There is thus a potentially serious contradiction between indigenous peoples' holistic vision of development and the thematic, compartmentalized and quantified approach of the Millennium Development Goals.

23. As highlighted in 2004 by an indigenous leader (Victoria Tauli Corpuz), now a member of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as of 2005: "The key weakness of the Millennium Development Goals is that they do not question the mainstream development paradigm, nor do they address the economic, political, social and cultural structural causes of poverty ... The path of incurring more debts, engaging in more aggressive extraction of mineral resources, oil or gas in indigenous peoples' territories, or further liberalizing imports to the detriment of traditional livelihoods, in all probability, would not alleviate poverty among indigenous peoples."

24. The *Human Development Report, 2004* (p. 9) makes the case that cultural diversity is not in itself a cause of conflict, but becomes dangerous when economic and political inequalities are deepened along cultural or ethnic lines. While noting that economic and social policy reform is critical, the *Report* maintains that multicultural policies must be instituted that address existing inequalities between indigenous and tribal peoples and other population groups. Millennium Development Goals do not address explicitly poverty structured along ethnic lines. A recent United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) study by Alberto Minujin and Enrique Delamonica (2003) showed that the number of countries on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals would almost triple if policies seeking to narrow the gaps were applied.

25. As acknowledged in the Executive Summary of the Millennium Report of the Secretary-General entitled *We the Peoples*,[i] the best way to prevent ethnic and religious conflict "is to promote healthy and balanced economic development, combined with human rights, minority rights and political arrangements in which all groups are fairly represented". Thus, rights-based approaches to development and good governance are key to achieving the Millennium Development Goals for indigenous peoples and for attaining the broader goals of democratization and construction of more inclusive societies.

26. The recognition of indigenous peoples' right to define their own priorities for development is reflected in a number of international human rights instruments and guidelines:

- United Nations human rights covenants and treaties, which include important forms of protection for indigenous peoples that are increasingly being promoted at the country level and development programming.
- ILO Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (No. 169) which stipulates that indigenous and tribal peoples shall have the right to decide their own priorities for the process of development and to exercise control over their own economic, social and cultural development.
- General Recommendation on the rights of indigenous peoples,[j] adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 18 August 1997, in which the Committee called in particular upon States parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination[k] to provide indigenous peoples with conditions allowing for a sustainable economic and social development compatible with their cultural characteristics (para. 4 (c)); and to ensure that members of indigenous peoples have equal rights in respect of effective participation in public life and that no decisions directly relating to their rights and interests are taken without their informed consent (para. 4 (d)).
- Initiatives of a number of Governments and multilateral and bilateral donor organizations including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the European Union (EU) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which have developed specific policies for their cooperation with indigenous peoples, in line with the above-mentioned principles.

27. It is crucial that the strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals be based on these international standards and made operational with the full participation of indigenous peoples themselves. The following section explores the more specific operational issues that should be taken into account in this process.

IV. Fundamental operational issues

28. At the country level, awareness-building of United Nations Country Team staff on indigenous peoples' issues and engagement in the Millennium Development Goals process is fundamental to greater inclusion of indigenous peoples' point of view in development planning. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNDP are collaborating on an indigenous peoples' component of a joint Human Rights Strengthening (HURIST) Programme

to mainstream human rights into UNDP practice and programming. HURIST pilots have proved to be valuable not only in the building of indigenous peoples' capacity to engage the United Nations system but also in the sensitization of United Nations staff to indigenous issues in general and specifically to the quality of indigenous peoples' lives in the countries they work in.

Qualifying and diversifying the Millennium Development Goals

29. Although the Millennium Development Goals do not identify indigenous peoples' priorities for development, there may be specific indigenous rights, such as the promotion of intercultural bilingual education, in the context of primary education, that can be promoted within the context of the Millennium Development Goals. The main challenge is then to interpret and qualify the Millennium Development Goals as related to the rights and priorities of indigenous peoples in a way that is relevant and attributes to indigenous peoples a sense of ownership in the process, and to articulate the Millennium Development Goals within the framework of international human rights standards. It will be crucial for the Millennium Development Goals to be localized so that communities are also beneficiaries in any aggregate improvements.

30. Table 2 outlines how Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2 could be interpreted based on the main issues raised by indigenous representatives in a number of international forums.

31. The alignment of the Millennium Development Goals with indigenous priorities demands participatory needs assessments and the development of specific indigenous peoples' strategies for reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Such strategies will necessarily be integrated and multifaceted in order to address the complexity of indigenous peoples' poverty situations. Considering the diversity of these peoples, there is a need to undertake such processes at the lowest level possible, involving the concerned communities in the specific local and national contexts.

Table 2
Interpretation of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2 in terms of indigenous priorities and their main policy instruments

Millennium Development Goal	*Indigenous priorities*	*Main policy instruments*
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Recognition of indigenous rights to territories and resources. Respect for indigenous peoples' own institutions and of indigenous judicial system. Recognition of indigenous peoples' own perceptions of poverty and well-being. Full participation in the development process, including national and local planning exercises and decision-making and the PRSPs. Strengthening of indigenous economies.	ILO Convention No. 169 United Nations draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples ADB: Policy on Indigenous Peoples EU: 1998 Council resolution on support to indigenous peoples IADB: Strategic Framework for Indigenous Development UNDP: UNDP and Indigenous Peoples: A Policy of Engagement World Bank: Draft Operational Policies 4.10 and draft Bank Procedures 4.10
2. Achieve universal primary education	Recognition of indigenous peoples' rights to intercultural and bilingual education. Accreditation of indigenous peoples' own education systems.	Universal Declaration of Human Rights[a] International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[b] Convention on the Rights of the Child[c] UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity ILO Convention No. 169 Dakar Framework for Action[d]

[a] General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).
[b] See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[c] General Assembly resolution 44/25, annex.
[d] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Final Report of the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000*, Paris 2000.

Consultation and participation

32. The right of indigenous peoples to determine their own development path is embodied in the fundamental concepts of consultation and participation as emphasized, inter alia, in ILO Convention No. 169 and the United Nations draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. The Convention on the Rights of the Child also recognizes the right of all children to express their views in all matters affecting them. The key principle with regard to consultation is the establishment of mechanisms that ensure that communities are able to give their free, prior and informed consent to activities affecting them after a process that takes into account their own methods of decision-making.

33. Some of the main operational elements of free, prior and informed consent already identified require that:

- Consultation should take place in good faith and fully disclose the intent and scope of the activity.
- The representatives consulted should be chosen by indigenous peoples themselves in accordance with their own procedures.
- Consultation should be undertaken in a manner appropriate to the circumstances and through appropriate procedures, for example, with respect for the language and time requirements of traditional decision-making.
- Where indigenous peoples do not have the right to veto proposed initiatives, the consultation process should ensure that they have a realistic chance of affecting the outcome.

34. A recent workshop organized by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and aimed at furthering the understanding of the principle of free, prior and informed consent was held in January 2005.

Indicators, data collection, data disaggregation

35. Participants at the International Workshop on Data Collection and Disaggregation for Indigenous Peoples, organized in January 2004 at the request of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, "stressed the need for developing a conceptual framework for rights-based indicators to ensure that the data collected would be relevant to indigenous peoples, while allowing for the measurement of issues crucial for indigenous peoples' development and rights, such as control over land and resources, equal participation in decision-making and control over their own development processes" (E/C.19/2004/2, para. 23). The Workshop also underlined the fact that the lack of reliable disaggregated data constituted a severe limitation in terms of measuring the impact of development programmes on indigenous peoples' quality of life. At the same time, it is acknowledged that data collection and disaggregation concerning indigenous peoples pose unique challenges in terms of developing data for global comparative purposes as well as developing data that are useful and relevant for indigenous peoples at a microlevel.

36. Disaggregation of data is needed in order to extend the analysis beyond simple national averages that can be misleading, signal false progress or mask disparities related to ethnicity. The need for the collection and use of disaggregated data is

implied in a number of international instruments such as ILO Convention No. 169, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[l] the Convention on the Rights of the Child[m] and the United Nations draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, among others.

37. The development of relevant indicators and the collection of disaggregated data must be undertaken with the full participation of the indigenous peoples concerned.

38. While there exist some examples of good practice in data collection and disaggregation coming from the country level such as the Guatemala National Human Development Report, and the development of a human development index for the Mapuche population in southern Chile (*El Índice de Desarrollo Humano en la población Mapuche de la Región de la Araucanía: Una Aproximación a la Equidad Interétnica e Intraétnica* (2003)),[n] efforts to replicate and disseminate these achievements are limited.

39. As is the case with the Millennium Development Goals themselves, the 48 related indicators do not allow for a disaggregated monitoring of progress concerning indigenous peoples, nor has there been a concerted effort to qualify the indicators with regard to indigenous peoples' specific priorities (for example, the net enrolment of indigenous children in primary education as well as the number of children having access to bilingual education). Practically, this would mean presenting aggregated key indicators in an information pyramid that, at the lower levels, provided disaggregated indicators and described interrelationships with underlying problems.[o] Other issues of importance for data collection are the development of methodological tools, guidelines and questions that can assist in identifying indigenous peoples and conducting appropriate participatory processes; greater collaboration between national, regional and international data-collecting bodies; and greater engagement of organizations focused on indigenous peoples in data-collection processes at national levels.

40. Within the World Health Organization (WHO), the Millennium Development Goals are being taken into account both in current work and in preparing the Organization's future goals. Three of the eight Development Goals, 8 of the 18 targets and 18 of the 48 indicators are health-related. The Millennium Development Goals do not provide a comprehensive list of health targets (for example, they lack indicators for reproductive health, reduction in non-communicable diseases and HIV treatment) nor do they allow for a disaggregated monitoring of progress, as noted above. In response to the need for disaggregated data, WHO is in the process of identifying appropriate methodologies for data analysis to discern health disparities across ethnic groups and indigenous affiliations.

V. Recommendations and ways forward

41. The Inter-Agency Support Group makes the following recommendations and commitments.

42. The United Nations Millennium Project has underlined that a major policy breakthrough is needed in 2005 if the world's poorest countries are to be on track with respect to meeting the Millennium Development Goals and fulfilling the

broader aspirations of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Project has a mandate that involves working in expert task forces with developing countries and other partners "to prepare strategies to help countries achieve the goals by bringing together the best current thinking and research" including "reviewing innovative practices, prioritizing policy reforms, identifying means of policy implementation and evaluating financing options" (www.undp.org/mdg). As such, the Project could prove to be a vital vehicle with respect to:

- Furthering the understanding among Governments of the importance of indigenous peoples' contribution to sustainable development and national economies, especially through its sectoral reports by expert task forces.
- Building national capacity to collect and disaggregate data and to practice free, prior and informed consent.
- Advocating for improving the process of engagement, consultation and participation of indigenous peoples in development planning.

43. The United Nations Millennium Project country pilots (where indigenous peoples are present) should refer to and target indigenous peoples and their concerns, where possible.

44. Partnerships with indigenous peoples would build on the human rights approach to development followed by the United Nations, with the aim of empowering indigenous institutions, building on, preserving, promoting and protecting indigenous knowledge, cultural expressions, practices and systems, and strengthening indigenous economies in the process and the capacity of indigenous peoples to engage in local and national planning processes and in global policy advocacy.

45. At the global level, the work of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues over the coming years will provide general indications and recommendations on how to interpret and operationalize the Millennium Development Goals within the framework of human rights and as related to specific indigenous rights to land and resources, bilingual education, culturally appropriate health services, etc. These recommendations must be integrated into the international and national plans to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and reduce poverty, including the PRSPs and the common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) processes.

46. The 2005 review of the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration will provide a strategic entry point for including concern for indigenous peoples in the Millennium Development Goals process in a systematic way. The review should take explicitly into account the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples in both the urban and rural contexts, and in particular indigenous women, when dealing with each and every goal, and not only on issues related to poverty.

47. The members of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues will support the efforts of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to analyse and comment on the ongoing implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The Support Group will support the efforts of the Forum to raise awareness of indigenous issues at the review and, if possible, participate in the events surrounding the review in September 2005.

48. In countries where indigenous peoples have weak institutional capacity, the United Nations Country Teams have a key role in encouraging proactive dialogue with indigenous representatives. Therefore, increased support and capacity development are needed to build the awareness of Country Team staff.

49. As part of its mandate to mobilize peoples' movements in the North and South by informing, inspiring and encouraging "peoples' involvement and action for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals", the Millennium Campaign should ensure outreach to indigenous peoples' organizations and include indigenous peoples in its strategy.

50. At the local and national levels, there is a need to strengthen the institutionalized mechanisms for consultation and participation of indigenous peoples, building on the fundamental principles of free, prior and informed consent and full participation in the development process. The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues supports the belief that this should be understood and implemented as a process rather than through ad hoc events. The quality of such processes will to a large extent depend on the allocation of resources for awareness-raising and capacity-building of indigenous peoples' organizations and government partners, and on the inclusion of indigenous women and youth in the process. At the operational level, this can begin with participatory needs assessments and developing indigenous strategies for achieving and monitoring the Millennium Development Goals.

51. Partnerships at the international and national levels should increase efforts to support and build on indigenous peoples' articulation of their own path for development, and should make every effort to provide adequate funding, technical and institutional support, and training to assist those development efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, as articulated by indigenous peoples.

52. The collection of disaggregated data by gender and by ethnic identity is fundamental to gaining an accurate understanding of indigenous peoples' poverty situation, in order to qualify policies, and to develop appropriate programmes and monitor impact. The Millennium Development Goal reports and National Human Development Reports should include data on indigenous peoples where applicable, as the findings could influence the design of national Millennium Development Goal strategies and develop indicators specific to their needs. Organizations and Governments should commit themselves to collecting and disseminating the pertinent information on a timely basis to demonstrate the specific situation of indigenous peoples in the process of implementing the Millennium Development Goals. The collection of disaggregated data and development of relevant indicators should also be an integral element of the strengthening of national capacities in the area of statistical information and reporting.

Notes

[a] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, 2003: Millennium Development Goals: A Compact Among Nations to End Human Poverty* and errata (New York, Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 21.

[b] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 23* (E/2004/43), chap. I, sect. B.1, para. 4.

[c] Ibid., para. 3.

[d] Ibid., para. 13.

[e] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[f] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[g] Ibid., annex II.

[h] *Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2004).

[i] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.I.16.

[j] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 18* (A/52/18), annex V.

[k] General Assembly resolution 2106 A (XX), annex.

[l] General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex.

[m] General Assembly resolution 44/25, annex.

[n] Temas de Desarrollo Humano Sustenable, No. 8 (Santiago de Chile, Programa de las Naciones Unidas, Universidad de la Frontera, Ministerio de Planificación y Cooperación, 2003).

[o] See "How to measure the right to education: indicators and their potential use by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights", background paper submitted by Isabel Kempf, Programme Management Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Santiago, Chile (E/C.12/1998/22 of 13 November 1998).